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ABSTRACT

LaGuardia Community College (New York) provides secondary education through its Middle College program, which includes comprehensive remedial programs for low ability students. During the 1974-75 academic year, two participant observers made over 400 observations of the Middle College's activities, focusing on: (1) instructional methods, materials, and content; (2) incentives and rewards; (3) failure management; (4) counseling patterns; (5) discipline in the classroom; and (6) LaGuardia-Middle College interface. Findings of the study revealed that students expected primarily academic advantages from the program. After a half year in the program, however, social advantages were seen as most important. Faculty expectations of professional growth were fulfilled due to greater academic freedom and the opportunity for personalized relationships. Although the majority of those questioned agreed on the general success of the program, it was felt that the small size of the program, rather than the college setting, was responsible for increased learning. The emphasis and effectiveness of basic skill instruction, as implemented, appeared to rank behind the size, setting, and counseling remedial components. There was some feeling that students were abusing the school's lenient attendance policy; however, any proposed policy change was rejected as potentially damaging to the atmosphere of the school. (NHM)

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MIDDLE COLLEGE
LaGUARDIA COMMUNITY COLLEGE

RESEARCH REPORT

PARTICIPANT OBSERVER STUDY

September 1974 - June 1975

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of Institutional Research

LaGuardia Community College of the
City University of New York

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I Background of the Problem

During the first year, the participant observation study of the Middle College program adopted three basic aims.

1) To monitor faculty, student and administrators' expectations and attitudes toward the program;

2) To describe and analyze the program's remedial functions including the development of basic and interpersonal skills; and,

3) To assess the educational and social impact the Middle College and LaGuardia College communities had on one another.

The decision to use participant observation to study the Middle College program came about in June 1973. At that time, Middle College planners issued a report suggesting that researchers assess the program in two areas. One area involved the evaluation of those product-oriented aspects of Middle College such as student achievement in various curricula. The second area was the evaluation of items such as methods of instruction and the House system which are process oriented.[1] Research plans primarily called for the use of testing to assess the program's product and the use of field work, emphasizing participant observation, to evaluate Middle College's educational and social process.

The choice of using participant observation as a research tool involved the consideration of four principal factors: (1) the Middle College's broad interpretation of remediation; (2) the need to provide faculty and administrators in a new program with feedback on program's progress; (3) the desire to present an empirically based set of guidelines and analysis to those who seek to emulate Middle College; and (4) the opportunity to contribute to the field of research by designing and implementing a test and field work methodology which scholars have been eager to experiment with in recent years. A brief discussion of each factor follows.

Participant observation seemed to be a particularly appropriate method to evaluate a program which has such a multi-

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1. Fiorello H. LaGuardia Community College, City University of New York, Middle College Plan, June, 1973, Mimeographed.

faceted remedial approach. As designed, Middle College's remedial efforts are a function of several program components: Middle College's small size and college setting, a component geared to offer students individualized attention and to motivate interest; academic and personal counseling, aimed especially at helping students to develop the interpersonal skills of decision-making, cooperation and leadership; and basic skill instruction, designed to develop communication and computational skills.[1]

Each component is associated with an innovative structure, function or role. The small size and college campus location of the program is an example of an innovative structure. The decision to associate responsibility for counseling with the role of Teacher-Cour[illegible]r and the function of a new structure for high school cal[illegible]ed [illegible]ouse are additional examples of novel program organization. Finally, the design to infuse basic skill instruction in all subject classes is cited a novel remedial function. These new remedial dynamics suggested to planners that there were perhaps things to be learned by a continuous monitoring of their implementation. Participation observation appeared to be one approach to accomplish this task.

The second factor involved in the choice of participant observation was its ability to provide faculty and staff with feedback on the program's progress. Planners suggested that empirical field data may provide information useful in the efficient allocation of time, material, and human resources. It was also suggested that intermittent feedback may enable the staff to assess their progress to date and to make changes if, and when needed.

The third factor mentioned above in electing participant observation research was its potential use in constructing practical guidelines for those seeking to borrow from Middle College's experiences. As noted, planners sought evaluation techniques which would not only yield program results but would also begin to isolate factors contributing to the achievement of those results. Planners sought this dual evaluation approach under the assumption that parties interested in the Middle College as a model would benefit by the inclusion of such field based information as the effectiveness of various institutional

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1. See Appendix B, Diagram No. 1, Middle College - Remedial Approach.

methods and technology, the use of reward and incentive systems and the relative success of various methods of classroom discipline.[1]

Finally, the use of field work in association with testing represented to planners a step toward integrated research designs which may be replicable in other educational and social settings. Recent literature has noted the potential contributions such a design may make to theoretical developments in the behavioral sciences and planners suggested the Middle College program and the research staff capabilities provided the opportunity to begin work on such a design.[2]

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1. For an example of the practical as well as theoretical aspects of participant observation research see Jack D. Mezirow, "Analysis and Interpretation of the Adult Basic Education Experience in the Inner City: Toward a Theory of Practice in the Public Schools", Teachers College, Columbia University, 1971. Mimeographed.

2. See Sam D. Sieber, "The Integration of Fieldwork and Survey Methods," American Journal of Sociology, 78, May, 1973, p. 1335-1360. Sieber argues that through the use of field work, critical factors may be identified with relationships among them suggested; the full complexity and sublety of the subject matter under study may be captured without loss or distortion due to quantification; survey questions may be focused and made more relevant to the subject under study; and research findings may be interpreted and illustrated through the researcher's intimate familiarity with the field. On the other hand, Sieber notes, survey methods may lend precision to the findings of field research by demonstrating and generality of observations or the limits of generality and by verifying field interpretations.

METHOD

The Role of Participant Observers

During each of the program's three academic quarters, two participant observers made over 400 observations of the Middle College's activities.[1] After an initial developmental phase observers began to focus their efforts on these three aims described earlier: (1) the monitoring faculty and student expectations and attitudes toward the program; (2) the description and analysis of the program's remedial functions including the development of basic and interpersonal skills; and (3) the assessment of the educational and social impact the Middle College and LaGuardia College communities had on one another.

As observers participated in classes, faculty meetings and other activities, their roles were primarily ones of observers. They extended their participation, however, to conduct structured interviewing and to make observations at weekly meetings or conferences. For example, two of the more notable interim observer reports were those made to the staff in November 1974 and February 1975.[2] The November report was based on preliminary find-

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1. Field workers gathered the bulk of their data during the first two quarters.

2. On the method and theory of participant observation, see Barney G. Glaser and Anselm L. Strauss, The Discovery of Grounded Theory: Strategies for Qualitation Research, Chicago, Aldine Publishing Co., 1967. For examples of the use of the participant observation in educational settings see Howard S. Becker & Blanche Geer, "Participant Observation: The Analysis of Qualitative Field Data" in Richard N. Adams & Jack J. Preiss, eds., Human Organization Research, Homewood, Illinois, Dorsey Press, 1960; Roberta Ash, "An Educational Experiment in the Inner City: A Participant Observer's Report," in David Street, ed., Innovation in Mass Education, N.Y., Wiley & Sons, 1969; Seymour B. Sarason, The Culture of the School and the Problem of Change, Boston, Allyn & Bacon, 1971; G. Alexander Moore, Jr., Realities of the Urban Classroom, N.Y., Anchor Books, 1967; Malcolm Parlett and David Hamilton, "Evaluation as Illumination: A New Approach to the Study of Innovative Programs," Center for Research in the Educational Sciences, University of Edinburgh.

ings of the first ten weeks of operation and made comments and suggestions on a variety of program aspects.[1] The February report dealt specifically with data collected on the House and Teacher-Counselor function and role.[2]

Phasing

The participant observer study had three phases: Developmental; Focused; and Data Analysis and Report Writing.

Developmental Phase

This phase included the time period between September and December 1974. At that time, observers analyzed the findings of student, faculty and staff interviews taken in May 1974 during the program's recruitment process. The earlier interviews were primarily designed to measure participant attitudes and expectations and would serve as the basis for comparison with similar interviews taken toward the end of the year.[3]

In addition, observers conducted intensive field work for the purpose of developing categories of interaction with which to measure the program's educational and social processes. After working with a variety of categories, a final coding scheme emerged in December. The coding Scheme was designed to render data useful in meeting the emphases of the observer study - emphases which the preliminary field work had also

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1. The November report is contained in LaGuardia Community College, Office of Institutional Research, City University of New York, Interim Report on Middle College Evaluation Project 1974-1975. Mimeographed, p. 17.

2. Observers benefitted from intermittent consultations with the Academy for Educational Development whose comments on method and substance helped to enhance accuracy.

3. The May interview findings are reported in Joel C. Millonzi and Aliza K. Adelman, The Recruitment Process: The Program and its Participants, LaGuardia Community College, August, 1974. Mimeographed.

reinforced. The final coding scheme assigned categories under the following higher-order groupings:

Instructional methods, materials and content;
Incentives and rewards as motivating devices;
Failure management;
Counseling patterns;
Discipline in the Classroom; and
LaGuardia-Middle College interface[1].

Focused Phase

This phase, extending from January through April 1975, was one in which observers began to more closely monitor activities in Middle College classrooms, college classes and other activities where Middle College participants were present. Observers coded their field notes according to the scheme developed in the prior phase.

Observers focused on activities associated with certain program roles and structures. This was particularly true of the remediation analysis where, as noted earlier, each of the remedial components has observable roles, functions and structures which field workers could identify and examine. To assess the remedial impact of Middle College's size and setting, for example, observers studied the degree of participant interaction, especially between teacher-counselor and student, student and student and college student and Middle College student. Observers placed analytical significance on the intensity of the interaction among the participants and, perhaps, more importantly, on the observable influence this process had on student motivation and learning. Further, when attempting to measure the counseling component (particularly its influence on the development of interpersonal skills), field workers primarily examined the program's House structure and the teacher-counselor role.[2] Finally, when monitoring the basic skills instructional component, observers focused on the functioning of most classroom activity and sought out such things as the degrees of effectiveness

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1. See Appendix A for a detailed description of the categories.

2. See Appendix B, Diagrom No. 2, Middle College - Remedial Approach, Participant Observation Research Design.

displayed by various instructional methods, materials and incentives.

In addition to observation, participant observers conducted follow-up interviews during this phase with Middle College staff and thirty Middle College and college students. The Middle College staff and student interviews sought to compare present participant attitudes and expectations with those recorded during the recruitment process. In selecting Middle College students for interviews, observers chose ten each from high, middle and low achievement categories based on the first quarter's grades. The purpose of this selective process was to attempt to gain a cross section of opinion about the program as well as to gain insight into any varying attitudes which may exist among students at differentiating performance levels. College students were randomly selected. The data derived by the interviews, in addition to being of interest in its own right, would serve as an internal source of a comparison with some conclusions rendered by the observation data.[1]

Data Analysis and Report Writing

During May and June, coded field notes were transferred onto a McBee card cataloguing system, with cards being punched according to the analytic scheme developed earlier. When this process was completed, field workers began a systematic process of data retrieval and analysis on which this report was written.

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1. Interview guides are contained in Appendix A.

FINDINGS

The participant observer findings are presented in the following seven categories:

I. A Comparison of Student and Faculty Expectations and Attitudes: The First Year;

II. A Comparison of High and Low Achieving Students;

III. College Student Attitudes toward Middle College: A Sample;

IV. Middle College's Remedial Function;

V. Classroom Dynamics;

VI. Middle College - College Interface;

VII. Discussion.

I. A COMPARISON OF STUDENT AND FACULTY EXPECTATIONS AND ATTITUDES: THE FIRST YEAR [1]

Recruitment and Reasons for Participating [2]

Students

The vast majority of Middle College students initially heard of the program from their guidance counselor or from a Middle College representative visiting their respective junior high schools.

The reason that loomed largest in students' minds for desiring admission into Middle College was the program's potential academic advantages (". . . I hope to gain learning ability and to do better in school.") Students saw career and social advantages as their second and third choices. After about a half year in the Middle College, however, student attitudes indicated that social advantages of the program stood foremost in their minds. By social advantages, students most frequently meant greater freedom ("they don't baby you by having bells") and better relationships with teachers whom students perceived as forebearing ("they don't yell at you in the halls; they try to use psychology on you.") Freedom, as students spoke of it, seldom had connotations of organizational self-governance, democracy or constitutional liberties; it primarily referred to the relaxation of a punitive environment which many associated with the meaning of school.

Faculty

Faculty initially heard of the program directly from its first director or from newspaper advertisements. Initial interviews indicated that the faculty's primary reason for desiring to work in Middle College was an opportunity for professional growth. Follow-up interviews suggested that what professional growth had taken place was, in the faculty's view, attributable to such things as freedom in curriculum development and design and

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1. The following findings are based on a content analysis of interview and observation data. See Appendix C for interview guides and thematic schemes. The responses of Director, Assistant Director and Guidance Counselor are included as faculty.
2. For a fuller account of the recruitment process, see Millonzi and Adelman, The Recruitment Process: The Program and its Participants.

personalized relationships among faculty and between students and faculty. It is interesting to note that initial faculty interviews predicted that social advantages would in fact be the most interesting aspect of Middle College to students.

Program's Size

Students

At the beginning of the year, students did not mention any potential benefits of the program's small size. Midway through the year, however, two thirds of the student responses felt that Middle College's small size was a major successful factor of the program. ("The teachers give you more attention; they help you. In a big high school you don't get that. You either know or you don't. That's it.")

Faculty

During initial interviews faculty mentioned Middle College's small size as an important aspect of the program but they gave it less early emphasis than they did during follow-up interviews. When interviewed a second time, teachers mentioned the program's size factor as contributing to better relations with students and colleagues as well as the handling of disciplinary problems. In addition, faculty mentioned size as a major aspect of Middle College which other programs may wish to replicate.

College Setting

Students

In September, many students cited the potential advantages of the program's college environment. As mentioned, students felt that the college atmosphere would promote learning and ease their maturation process. By contrast, midpoint interviews found students conscious of few, if any, specific academic advantages, but a significant number did sight psychological ("more self-control") and social advantages ("It makes you feel more responsible. When you get to college you won't be scared.")

Faculty

During both initial and follow-up interviews, faculty gave mixed responses to the relative influence college climate had on student learning. The approximately half which saw a positive impace of the college environment cited such things as greater freedoms for student inquiry, and anticipatory socialization into college life styles. ("I think the students see that there's a college here they can strive for.") The next largest number of responses (less than half) indicated that college environment may have a negative influence on student learning. In this regard faculty cited such matters as negative college student influences ("college students not interested in school") and the competition taking place between the college and Middle College for limited facilities

Attendance

Students

Approximately two-thirds of the student responses indicated that they attended classes regularly, and one-half mentioned being on time. Field data for the second academic quarter showed a pattern of four to eight students attending class on time as opposed to two to seven being punctual for House. The end of class usually saw ten to twelve out of a potential seventeen students in attendance. House usually had slightly less than that number by the end of the session.

An interim report to Middle College as to why cutting and lateness took place included the following explanations: (1) the LaGuardia Community is a novel environment to Middle College students and exploring college activities and people is as interesting to some as attending classes; (2) periods (at that time 35 minutes) could be too short, and/or the day may be too long; (3) lack of student sense of self-management (many students, for example, found it difficult to adjust to an environment regulated without bells); (4) classes may not have been challenging for some; and (5) students may have felt that penalties for cutting or being late were far too remote.

Number one seems no longer to be a significant reason; familiarity with campus life has helped make this concern (if it can be truly called that) less of a problem. Number two has also ameliorated as a concern. The program lengthened the periods

to forty minutes and condensed the schedule into consecutive periods. Numbers three, four and five, however, appear to need more attention from the program. While students are now accustomed to the lack of bells, they do continue to manifest less than a desirable sense of self discipline - a trait which they'll need to fulfill their strong career aspirations. In addition, Middle College classes should continue to challenge students to move their attention from concrete to conceptual areas. As will be mentioned in the discussion section, remedial efforts lack emphasis on cognitive development and run the risk of having short-lived benefits. Finally, as teachers themselves admit, additional work needs to be done in clarifying and identifying any ambiguities that exist in current attendance policies.

The majority of student responses expressed an opinion that attendance policies should not be tightened up, or tightened up only moderately. At the same time, almost one-third (mostly responses from the higher academic achievers) indicated a desire for stricter enforcement of attendance rules, citing the fact that students abused the existing policy. Students often voiced a resentment of what they perceived as punitive attendance policies in traditional high schools. They were, therefore, admittedly reluctant to advocate a stricter policy for fear of reinstituting traditional measures. ("No, because it will be like other high schools." "I don't want it to be like other high schools because that's what makes it different, but it should be a little stricter.")

Faculty

The majority of faculty responses, like those of students, were reluctant to recommend stricter measures for absenteeism and lateness. The predominant teacher response was that these concerns should be addressed by consistently applying a number of alternative measures and eliminating any ambiguities that exist in present policies, in strengthening counseling measures and, when appropriate, increased parental involvement. ("I don't think more stringent penalties will solve the problem . . . The problem lies in education and in the development of skills of self discipline and responsibilities.")

House

Students

This unique feature of Middle College elicited mixed responses from students. About one-half liked it; another one-third did not enjoy it; and, another one-fifth didn't care or had mixed feelings about House. The predominant positive aspect of House which students cited was the informal social process and close peer cohesiveness which takes place there. ("I think it's a good idea - the social aspects.") Negative reactions were most often explained by the fact that there was little to do in House, or little to be gained by the effort. (I don't even come to House because nothing goes on. If we had something doing it might be ok...It's just for attendance.")

Faculty

Throughout the year, teachers, while generally positive about their teacher-counselor role, have felt frustrated over its application to the House structure. The predominant number of faculty responses suggest that training and perhaps additional time in House are required to see this role achieve its full potential.

The House aim of promoting in students a sense of independence, cooperation and decision-making led teachers to interpret their House role in one of two basic ways: "teacher-counselor as initiator" and "teacher-counselor as facilitator." Generally, the adoption of the "initiator" style witnesses a faculty member becoming more directive in House centered activities. The adoption of the facilitator role sees faculty as less directive and more encouraging to students to conceive and initiate activities on their own. Midway through the program, research showed that while there was some success with the facilitator model, there was in general a more workable environment with the initiator model.[1]

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1. See discussion section on Middle College philosophy.

Independent Study

Students

During the year, work in the area of independent study, whether for remedial or enrichment purposes, has been only in developing stages. As will be mentioned below, high and medium academic achievers did more independent study work than did low achievers. Those from both groups,however,that did elect such an option, tended to enjoy it. ("I don't mind doing that, i.e., make up, as long as I pass. I like it as long as you learn.")

Faculty

Faculty interviews pointed out that when independent study options were in fact chosen, the decision to adopt this method of study was largely made jointly by teacher and student.

Awareness of Social Problems

Students

Upon entering the program, students stressed an awareness of such social problems as those of drugs, delinquency, crime and alcoholism. They cited these as ones which particularly affected youth. When interviewed later, student replies indicated that they had generally learned more about crime and urban society while in Middle College. A series of questions on social issues found that more than one-half of student responses indicated their knowledge of New York City had improved (compared to two-fifths who said it hadn't). One-third of the responses to another question indicated that students felt that their knowledge of the U.S. had also improved (about one-half said it hadn't). Finally, about an equal number of responses to still another question (approximately half the sample) demonstrated that students perceived gaining some knowledge of foreign countries while in the Middle program.

Faculty

The majority of faculty responses suggested an opinion among faculty that Middle College had fostered in students a greater

awareness of urban society. There was little faculty opinion as to the program's impact on student awareness of national issues. ("The curriculum in urban studies has been reasonably successful. The students are definitely more aware.")[1]

Attitude toward Academic Subjects

Students

Before coming to Middle College, students frequently mentioned academic difficulties (particularly a lack of interest in the subject matter) as a major problem in school. In that light, it is interesting to note student opinions concerning Middle College classes. Nearly two-thirds of the student responses had difficulty naming either what they considered to be their favorite or least favorite class. Those that did opinionate indicated a preference for social studies rather than for English, mathematics or science courses.[2]

Faculty

When asked about academic areas, the predominant faculty response was that Middle College allows a faculty member more flexibility to develop his/her own curriculum (". . . you're totally on your own to determine what's important and what materials to use.") This relative independence brought a favorable response from teachers. It also frequently resulted in promoting curriculum designs and materials which, in the faculty's view, differed from those of traditional high schools. ("This quarter I'm developing my own curriculum. The content is quite different from the traditional high school.")

Attitude toward Self-Evaluation

Students

A large majority (over two-thirds) favored the system of self-evaluation. The consensus was that students had a significant voice in determining their own grades and that teachers listened

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1. The faculty interview guide omitted asking about awareness of other cultures.
2. See also study of achievement at differentiating performance levels below.

("You get a chance to get what you think you deserve". "If you have a good point, they'll listen.")

Faculty

The vast majority of faculty agreed with the procedure of student self-evaluation as part of that which determines grades. ("Cumbersome though it is, I definitely approve . . There haven't been many cases where I differed with a student's self-evaluation and as often as not I had a higher opinion of his work than he did.") It is interesting to note that in determining grades faculty emphasized such criteria as attendance, attitude and effort more than they did actual quality of student's performance.

Interface

Students

Prior to entering the program, students foresaw academic (promotion of learning) and social (maturation) advantages accruing to themselves from interaction with college students. They also perceived some disadvantages such as the problem of being the youngest and "being looked down upon." At midpoint in the first year, about two-thirds of the students interviewed said they enjoyed going to school with college students (for the social and psychological mentioned above), and approximately the same proportion regarded college students as acquaintances. Students felt strongly, however, that they were disliked or resented by older students for being "troublemakers", "making noise and being disorderly." (They blame us for tearing up the rooms." "They think we are a nuisance." "They don't want us here.")[1]

Faculty

As mentioned, faculty responses on the impact of college environment on younger students have generally been ones mixed with potential positive and negative effects (mostly social and psychological). With regard to their own relations, faculty cited their greatest source of interaction occurring through college services

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1. See college student attitudes below.

or facilities such as college laboratories. Follow-up interviews found a strong feeling among faculty that greater exchanges with college faculty are needed, particularly with faculty members of their respective disciplines. At the time of the interviews, teacher responses with regard to the Middle College's campus image echoed those of students in the sense that faculty felt the college community dislike Middle College presence. There was a note of confidence, however, that increased communication with college people would promote understanding of the Middle College's mission and thereby reduce concerns. ("On the surface, (Middle College's) impact is unfavorable. There's a lack of communication. The college still doesn't know why we are here. I project that this image will change and the Middle College will become an accepted part of LaGuardia.") There was also some feeling among Middle College faculty that, as one member commented, the college was perhaps "intellectually ready but not emotionally (prepared)" for the experience of adolescences on campus.

Career Plans

Students

The career education component of Middle College received notable emphasis during the planning stages of the program and students listed career education as one of three major advantages they hoped to gain by attending Middle College. At the end of ninth grade, students cited technical fields (computer, photography, engineering, mechanics), semi-professional areas (nursing, medical or dental assistant) and secretarial services as those in which they were primarily interested. When asked again, nearly half of the responses expressed uncertainty or need for further guidance about career choices. ("I have to find out about that - I am not sure.") Many were openly unsure of their options, the implications of different careers and of their own aptitudes and/or preferences. Nevertheless, one-third were interested in attending a two-year college (none mentioned LaGuardia by name) and another one-third expressed interest in a four-year college program. An equal number (one-third) felt that Middle College was not presently (but would be) helping them to achieve whatever their present career aspirations were. ("They are setting me straight on what I really have to do. They prepare you for college." or "Not this year. They still have to get organized. Next year they will.")

Faculty

About one-half of the faculty responses indicated that Middle College was contributing to students career plans by promoting a more positive attitude toward education and by suggesting that attending college was now well within the realm of possibility. ("It has substantially increased the number of students who are now interested in going to college.") The other one-half of the responses either indicated not knowing or that it was too early to tell of Middle College's effects on student careers.

Appropriate Target Population

Students

Approximately three times as many students said that they would recommend Middle College to friends as would not. About thirty percent perceived the appropriate target population as those students with academic difficulties. Another thirty percent would recommend the program to students capable of assuming the responsibilities of freedom ("a kid with a lot of will power, who isn't tempted to cut." "You can't come in here jibin'; you got to be for real.") Twenty percent would not recommend Middle College, usually because they felt the program was too "lenient."

Faculty

Teachers' remarks indicate a dominant view of Middle College as a program for students of average aptitude but with a history of low achievement in traditional settings. There was some hesitancy in faculty responses noted about Middle College's viability with populations which had either significantly emotional problems or notably high achievers.

Recommended Changes

Students

The largest response - about one-third of the sample - suggested stricter disciplinary measures with regard to cutting, disorderly conduct and vandalism. ("Stricter rules to straighten up

kids from hanging out and making noise . . . show that they mean business . . .") Twenty percent mentioned a need for more recreational space and activities. Another twenty percent had no opinion or insisted that Middle College program was fine as it is.

Faculty

The two dominant themes from faculty with regard to possible changes were related to the areas of professional training and administration. Faculty cited the need for professional training, particularly in the area of counseling. While confident as teachers, faculty felt the need to improve their counseling skills. Faculty comments with regard to administration emphasized the need for a tighter administrative support structure, e.g. publication of yearly calendars and clearer articulation of policy. Such an organization, the point was reasoned, would provide faculty with more time to develop curriculum and attend to student needs.

II. A COMPARISON OF ATTITUDES OF HIGH AND LOW ACHIEVING STUDENTS[1]

1. How is Middle College different from a regular school?

Responses were somewhat spread. Nevertheless, top achievers tended to emphasize good relations with teachers and the relative freedoms of the program, e.g. the privileges of smoking and free time. High achievers also emphasized the academic advantages of Middle College (college courses and individual attention). Low achievers, while citing favorable teacher relationships and greater privileges more heavily emphasized "being treated like an adult" as a significant difference between Middle College and a traditional high school.

2. Has the program's small size helped you to learn?

Here the responses at all levels of achievement were evenly distributed with the strong majority answer: Yes.

3. Has the program's college setting helped you to learn?

While the majority response was no, more top achievers than low achievers said it made little difference. Many of the low achievers that mentioned college setting was influential on learning added that the difference was more distinctly in social or psychological terms ("making you grow up a little more," "making you feel important.")

4. Do you feel you can read better because of the program?

The responses were roughly evenly distributed between yes and no answers with high and middle achievers responding in the

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1. For this study the field staff used the first quarter's grade performance to select out high, medium and low achievers. While the thematic chart in Appendix C includes data on medium achievers, the follow selection is primarily contrasts performance levels below high (top) and low achievers.

negative slightly more than low achievers.

5. Do you feel you can write better because of the program?

Higher achievers mentioned their writing has improved by a small margin. Low achievers felt it hadn't.

6. Do you feel that you are better in mathematics because of the program?

High achievers noted "yes;" the majority of low achievers responded "no."

7. Do you feel your knowledge of New York City has increased?

Responses were about equally distributed among different achievers. "Yes" outweighed "no" for high and low performers.

8. Do you feel your knowledge of the United States has increased?

The general response was "no" with top achievers more emphatic than low achievers.

9. Do you feel that your knowledge about other societies has increased?

The responses among various achievers were roughly evenly distributed between "yes" and "no."

10. Do you usually attend classes regularly?
11. Are you usually on time for class?
12. Do you think school should be stricter about cutting and lateness?

High achievers attend considerably more promptly and regularly than do low achievers. In addition, high achievers, to a larger degree than low achievers, tend to feel that students abuse the program's relatively "lenient" attendance policy and that the program should be stricter in this regard. (See also "Attendance" in Section I of these findings). High achievers

tended to voice more impatience with the non-directed or "free" periods the program offered although the strongest opinions pro and con came from medium achievers.

13. Do you like evaluating your own performance? Does the teacher heed your comments?

Although there was a strong affirmative response to this question, low achievers indicated enjoying the self-evaluation process more so than high achievers who more often prefer an external evaluation.

14. Do you feel your teachers help you when you need it?

Only one response (from a high achiever) responded no.

15. What kind of things do you do in House? Who decides what activities should go on there? Do you like the House concept?

On the whole, more students enjoyed belonging to a House than did not with low achievers tending to be more positive. About half of the responses cited specific activities that Houses were engaged in (e.g. trips, movies, games, decorating the room).

16. Have you done any independent study? If so, what type? Did you enjoy it?

About two-thirds of the responses reported doing some sort of independent work (e.g. book reports and projects) and enjoying it. The high and medium achievers were more positive about the experience.

17-18. What is your favorite (least favorite) class? Why?

High achievers had more difficulty naming a favorite class than did low achievers. Nevertheless, the majority cited social studies over English or mathematics or science classes. Poorer students tended to be more emphatic in their preference of social studies than did the higher achievers.

19-20. What do you plan to do after graduating from Middle College? Is Middle College helping you to achieve your goals?

High achievers voiced uncertainty more often than did lower achievers. Nevertheless, as mentioned in Section I, approximately two-thirds of the responses indicated a desire to attend college. High achievers were evenly divided in their choice of two and four-year colleges; middle achievers tended to prefer a four-year college; and low achievers expressed preference for a two-year college. The majority of responses that found Middle College helpful in preparing for a career, with middle level achievers the most positive and high achievers the most negative about the help Middle College provided.

21-23. Do you like going to school with college students? Have you met any college students since arriving? Have college students conveyed their sentiments to you about Middle College?

Replies indicated that low achievers were both more sociable with college students and tended to be more positive about their college student relationships than did high achievers.

24. Would you recommend the Middle College to your 9th-grade friends? Why or why not?

The substantial major said "yes" with low achievers notably more positive than high achievers whose principle response was "maybe."

25. What type of students are appropriate for Middle College?

On this question the responses were evenly divided with equal numbers of high and low achievers recommending Middle College to the interesting combination of students who (a) have academic difficulties or (b) were responsible and mature students who have an interest in learning.

26. What changes would you like to see in the program?

Low achievers tended to suggest that no change or more free time activities take place while high and middle achievers tended to recommend tighter scheduling and stricter policies with respect to such things as cutting and misbehavior.

III. COLLEGE STUDENT ATTITUDES TOWARD MIDDLE COLLEGE: A SAMPLE

During Winter quarter, field workers interviewed a small sample of college students (23) to gain insight into their perceptions and attitudes toward Middle College. When asked what they knew of Middle College, the majority college student response was that they knew little about the program other than seeing its students around campus. Most of those who could name any facts about Middle College knew only that it was a program for high school students. A small number, however, did know of at least one of the program's goals.

When asked how they "felt about having Middle College students on campus," about half of the responses indicated that they "didn't mind," while another ten percent added that the younger students were welcome provided that they conducted themselves in a mature manner. To wit: "I don't mind their being here so long as they are not rowdy and vandalizing the place;" or "If they could somehow select only those mature enough, it would be all right."

After listing Middle College's goals to those who were unaware of them, field workers asked what the college students impression of these aims were. About one-half of the responses expressed no opinion while the majority which did find the goals desirable ("It's a fine idea to give them exposure beforehand so they will have a better chance when they enter college.")

IV. MIDDLE COLLEGE'S REMEDIAL FUNCTION: AN ANALYSIS

As mentioned, the Middle College remedial effort is a function of several program components: Middle College's small size and college setting, a component geared to offer students individualized attention and to motivate student interest in learning; basic skill instruction, designed to develop communication and computational skills; and academic and personal counseling, aimed especially at helping students to develop the interpersonal skills of cooperation, leadership and decision-making.

Program Size and Setting

Size

Interview and observation data indicate that the Middle College's size is the program's strongest remedial component. Both students and faculty refer to size when describing desirable aspects of the program including closer relationships and the ability to meet student needs. To a significant degree, size has accomplished its aim of helping teachers to provide individualized attention.[1]

Setting

While student responses indicate little awareness of the effects of college environment on learning (they see the college setting more in terms of desirable social or psychological effects), student responses do indicate a significant desire to attend college. Teachers point out that this desire appears to be a growing one among students and is, to a reasonable degree, the result of the program's college environment. There appears, then, to be some correlation of setting and motivation associated with the program albeit a less clear one than that of size with individualized attention.

Counseling

Counseling in Middle College occurs on two levels - individual and group. While Middle College's counseling efforts on an individual basis did appear to be promoting interpersonal skills,

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1. See Appendix B for remedial components and their respective aims.

particularly those of cooperation and decision making, the program's efforts at group counseling are only developing. During the year, individual counseling took place in a number of circumstances including student advisement on self-evaluation and grades, scheduling, attendance, cutting and personal matters. These sessions often were ones where teacher-counselors encouraged students to either cooperate in a process (self-evaluation, attendance and cutting) or to make their decisions in a methodical manner (grading, scheduling and personal affairs). By midpoint in the year, there were larger numbers of students who felt more comfortable with the self-evaluation, grading and personal decision-making. On an individual level, then, the counseling component has made progress in the area developing interpersonal skills.

Group counseling (or the promotion of interpersonal skills in groups) has been less notable than that which has taken place on an individual level. The principal forums where group counseling took place were in House or in special group counseling sessions. The focus of House is an activity which, theoretically, the group itself designs and implements. House potentially is, therefore, a forum for promoting leadership, cooperation and decision-making skills. The special counseling sessions, on the other hand, provide a block of time where the group may examine a variety social phenomena including values and group behavior as well as decision-making. During much of the first year, House activities fell short of their potential both because of a philosophical dilemma teacher-counselors shared over their roles and because of a need for professional staff development in the area of group counseling itself.

The philosophical dilemma centered on the issue of how directive teachers should be in House activities which, according to Middle College philosophy, are to emanate as much as possible from student designs and initiative. It was the lack of training to cope with issues such as this that tended to hinder teachers in both House and group counseling sessions and the participants recognize a need for improvement in this area.

Basic Skill Instruction

The aim of the basic skill remedial component is to foster an increased facility in students' communication and computational skills. Middle College attempted to do so by infusing basic skill instruction in all academic areas. The plan called for minimal use of separated basic skill instruction in classes and reading, writing and mathematics laboratories.

The emphasis and effectiveness of basic skill instruction, as implemented, appeared to rank behind the size, setting and counseling remedial components. In stating this, however, it is important to take into account the efforts that were made and the information that has gathered on the student population's remedial difficulties.

Observation data indicates that teachers were generally aware of their duty to teach remediation in class other than in basic English or Mathematics. With few exceptions, however, the teachers' efforts, for the most part, were less than consistent ones, often with a lack of continuity in approach. (For example, a teacher one day may stress the need for students to keep a list of vocabulary words they have learned but then not mention the list again for some time).

A few facts seem worthy of comment. The most consistent effort at imbuing non-remedial classes with basic skill instruction occurred in a social studies class where the instructor regularly included structured comprehension and vocabulary sessions into the class material. On the whole, teachers promoted communication skills - oral reading (decoding), vocabulary - more than they did computational skills.[1] With few exceptions there was also less emphasis on writing than reading. Although career exploratory classes were only a fraction of Middle College classes, their substance seemed to particularly lend itself the infusion of both communication and computational skills.

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1. This may be largely related to the fact that there were more English than Mathematics faculty teaching in areas outside their subject areas.

The following information on student remedial difficulties emerged from the field data:

Behavioral Difficulties

1. Listening;
2. Note-taking;
3. Following directions;
4. Attending class prepared with notebooks, pencils and other necessary materials

These appear to be the root of many of the following difficulties:

Communication Skills

A. Reading

1. Word recognition;
2. Pronunciation;
3. Comprehension[1]

B. Writing

1. Subject-verb agreement;
2. Sentence fragments;
3. Run-ons;
4. Distinguishing homonyms;
5. Paragraph development;
6. Use of apostrophes

C. Speaking

1. Subject verb agreement
2. Substitution of "x" for "s" sounds

Computational Skills

1. Addition (particularly keeping columns straight)
2. subtraction (particularly with zeros)
3. multiplication
4. division
5. fractions (particularly equating fractions with percentages)
6. decimal points
7. Reading and writing numbers into words
8. Reading symbols (word problems and map reading)

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1. A conversation with one English teacher emphasized how much more difficulty students have with writing words than sounding them.

V. CLASSROOM DYNAMICS

Participant observer data found the following patterns in Middle College classrooms:

Instructional Methods

Task oriented instruction (e.g. written exercises, games, question and answer and role playing) gained the student this population's attention more than did other methods.

Written exercises and openly competitive learning situations (among classroom groups or individuals) had a particular motivational influence on student participation.

Students frequently asked for and, in most cases, received individual attention from their teacher.

Independent study, while less than fully explored and hampered by scheduling problems, seems to have been a relatively ineffective substitute for the classroom for the average Middle College student. While a number of Middle College students did do and enjoy some independent work, their reactions indicated that for most, this experience would perhaps prove more worthwhile after they developed analytic skills which are often associated with classroom experiences.

Individualized instruction, involving diagnostic sessions and/or testing followed by individually prescribed courses of studies was used little in the program.

Many students appeared to be strongly audio-visually oriented and responded enthusiastically to films and other audio/visual aids.

Many students also appeared to be manually oriented and favorably responded to such activities as map drawing and model making.

Students consistently wished to know that for which they were responsible both in general (e.g. what course material was important) and in a specific sense (e.g. when should they take notes.)

Students, in general, had frequent difficulty doing homework assignments and handing them in on time.

Peers had a notable influence on each others learning when working in competitive team oriented activities.

Incentives and Rewards

Teachers most widely used verbal compliment as an incentive to individuals to continue their efforts, an incentive to which students favorably responded.

The second most widely-used incentive was that employing a folder or public chart of student progress. This method, while not as widespread as verbal compliment, elicited more dramatic student concern for their work, especially at self-evaluation times. The presence of public charts received a more sustained response, especially when such public display indicated progress toward an award to also be bestowed publicly.

A third incentive to learn was that of presenting material which appealed to student interest (e.g. factual rather than abstract material about crime, other cultures and careers).

A fourth most widely used incentive was that of suggesting that the material under examination was one which students may be tested on. While not used frequently, it appeared to be a powerful tool for capturing student attention.

Failure Management

The predominant teacher response to incorrect student work was to redefine or re-word the task until the student understood where he/she had made a mistake. A mathematics or science teacher, for example, might slow down or re-word an explanation or an English or social studies teacher in response to a reply indicating some misunderstanding of the material, might ask students to explain in their own words the meaning of a word, sentence or paragraph.

Students who became confused often managed their misunderstandings by becoming frustrated and giving up. If not immediately attended to, students at this point would often leave

the room, or in a last effort to gain the teacher's attention, would announce their intentions to do so.

Teachers generally managed moments of student failure sympathetically and rarely became openly annoyed.

Classroom Discipline

The two major instances which necessitated classroom discipline were disorderly conduct (e.g. talking, smoking, eating or reading newspapers in classroom) and students arriving late or leaving class early. It is interesting to note that teachers appeared more consistent in addressing the problems of disorderly classroom behavior than they were of lateness or early departure. With regard to disorderly conduct, teachers most frequently dealt with problems of this sort by chiding or reprimanding students. ("If you're not paying attention, I'd like you to take another seat", or "eating is not allowed in class and the matter is dropped.") Seldom did teacher either ignore disorderly behavior or, on the other hand, threaten to use punitive measures (dismissal, lowering one's grade or calling a student's parents). With regard to student lateness or early departures from class, the observer data indicates that teachers tended to address instances such as these about half of the time.[1]

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1. See discussion on Middle College philosophy in Section VII. Some faculty point out that counseling on attendance is best done privately and out of public view.

VI. LaGUARDIA COLLEGE - MIDDLE COLLEGE INTERFACE

There were four predominant types of interaction between Middle College and the LaGuardia College communities: administrative, faculty, classroom and informal student interaction. The administrative interface was extensive. Middle College's director participated in many college-wide functions and reported Middle College developments to a Middle College advisory committee which includes several college administrators. In addition, college administrators were frequently present at Middle College meetings and assemblies and have lent the program significant public support.

The interaction between Middle College and college teaching faculty, however, has been less noteworthy. While Middle College teachers have, for the most part, enjoyed some contact with college faculty, such contact has, from the viewpoint of Middle College teachers, been limited and focused on scheduling or other administrative matters. Middle College faculty would find it more desirable to increase communication with colleagues in the respective divisions.

Ties between college divisions and Middle College, while perhaps a subject of debate, is however, not necessarily a sign of college's faculty indifference to Middle College. For the most part, college faculty who taught Middle College students report that they would consider teaching them again and approximately forty college professors responded to a Middle College query seeking information on potential college-level work for the younger students.

College classes for Middle College students have been of two types: those in which Middle College students represent the majority and those where they are not. In the former case, Middle College student behavior tends to take on a characteristic similar to that of a Middle College class. When in the minority position in college classes, however, Middle College students tend to become less assertive. The presence of older students, challenging course requirements and different material and teaching styles all seem to account for this altered be-

havior pattern. It is interesting that when Middle College students are in the majority, college faculty seek greater communication with the program and tend to point out problems they encounter in "adjusting" their styles to a younger population.

During the second quarter, Middle College began to "screen" students before allowing them to enter college courses. Field data from classes where these selected students participated found that, with minor exceptions, the professors did not publicly distinguish Middle College from college students and professors' reports indicate that the selected students fitted in well with college work and students. Professors commented that Middle College students appeared to be a bit less motivated and conscientious about homework or laboratory assignments than did college students.

Midway through the first year, the informal interaction between Middle College and College populations had not been extensive. An early arena for student interaction had been the Great Hall where common interest in sports facilities and games attracted both populations. With that area closed for construction, public student interface became more diffuse. As mentioned earlier, low achievers tended to have more college acquaintances than high achievers. Other sources of interaction were internships established for Middle College students in the college and a big brother/sister program, the effectiveness of which need to be more fully explored.

VII. DISCUSSION

Our research discussions primarily centered on three areas: Middle College Remedial Pnilosophy; Instruction and Research Methodology.

Middle College Remedial Philosophy

The Middle College Plan stressed that the program promote freedom and responsibility for students. During the first year, faculty spent hours interpreting the degree of freedom and responsibility a remedial population might appropriately assume. At the onset the program intentionally took on a liberal interpretation of student freedoms and responsibilities. Arguments for doing so noted, among other things, that punitive school environments had already proven ineffective with students. It was also suggested that, as an experiment, it was Middle College's mission to learn whether or not a liberal setting - one which extends to younger students responsibilities in attendance, conduct, curriculum development and grading - could achieve improved results. Finally, and, perhaps most importantly, there was the argument that helping students to achieve a sense of freedom and responsibility was, in psychosocial sense, essential for the remedial process. Accordingly, Middle College, taking advantage of its small size, stressed counseling over basic skill instruction itself to accomplish remediation.

This remedial approach challenged faculty and students. Faculty members frequently asked just how much direction they may provide and yet remain consistent with the Plan as interpreted. Indeed, dilemmas such as this led to one remark dubbing Middle College as "an alternative high school for teachers." Students, on the other hand, while appreciating the freedoms, often had difficulty assuming responsibilities. They were accustomed, as one Director's Report noted, to compulsory education, and now they are being asked to participate in an education process which essentially was voluntary.[1]

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1. See Fillmore K. Peltz, Middle College Progress Report, August, 1974 - October, 1974. Mimeographed, page 4.

A year's research suggests two comments on this point. First of all, it might be useful to consider whether or not a student's full assumption of freedom and responsibility is a longer term goal of Middle College and, as such, an accomplishment that may come into fruition in other than the first year of the program. It may in fact be a bit too ambitious for a student population to reverse ten year traits during its initial year at Middle College. As one student remarked, "Most students come to the Middle College with the habit of cutting and failure. It's hard for them to adjust to responsibility."

The second point emphasizes something that Middle College seems to have already noted. This point is that the psycho-social remedial model has a complimentary relationship with basic skill instruction itself. The reason for this relationship seems to essentially lie in the fact that there are often forgotten properties of basic skill instruction which are fundamental to achieving the sense of freedom and responsibility promoted by psycho-social remedial approach. These properties include such cognitive and behavioral skills as listening, note-taking and following directions - skills which perhaps neither enthusiasts for psycho-social nor basic skill models amply stress.

Instruction

Comments on task oriented and individualized instruction are in order. With regard to task oriented instruction, it was found that students favorably responded to this method whether it was in the form of written exercises, games, role playing or question and answer techniques. This form of instruction seems to appeal to students not only because it provided an intellectual focus, but also because it tends to keep one occupied in activity, a state in which many energetic adolescents seem to feel most comfortable. In this connection it may be useful to note that research suggests that long run remedial success tends to rely on cognitive achievement.[1] Task orientation, with its potential for cognitive development, also has the benefit of quieting an active class. While this

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1. See for example, Joseph O. Loretan and Shelby Umans, Teaching the Disadvantaged: New Curriculum Approaches, New York: Teachers College Press, 1966.

later effect is useful, it should be of only secondary importance to teachers who should continue to stress the former use, attempting where possible, to move from the concrete to the conceptual framework.

Individualized instruction, on the other hand, in professional useage, implies that the teacher has carefully diagnosed student needs in an area and prescribed an individualized course of study. Field workers found that while Middle College employed a significant degree of individualized "attention," the program's efforts in individualized instruction were only seminal. If Middle College continues its heterogenous ability grouping (scholarly work suggests that it should), it will need to do more work in this area to insure learning from students at all performance levels.[1]

The distinction between individualized attention and instruction should not suggest that attending to students is less than an essential element in a remedial program such as Middle College. Indeed, individualized attention, in student opinion, was found significantly lacking in junior high school and is, from their viewpoint, a major advantage of Middle College.

Research Methodology

Finally, there are four observations which can be made with regard to research methodology. First, the fact that the participant observer staff was present in the program prior to the arrival of faculty and students seemed to minimize any

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1. A number of studies indicate that ability grouping while not hindering achievers does impede the progress of low achievers. See Walter Borg, "Ability Grouping in the Public Schools," Journal of Experimental Education, Vol. 34, No. 1, 1965; Lawrence Marascuilo and M. McSweeney, "Teaching and Minority Students" in Urban Education, June, 1972 and M. Goldberg, H. Passow and J. Justman, The Effects of Ability Grouping, Teachers College Press (New York: 1966).

discomfort that participants may have encountered had observers begun work at a later date. Secondly, the desire by the staff for frequent feedback from observers was notable. Observers were continually asked to share their observations with staff - petitions which observers were hesitant to comply with until confident in their conclusions. Thirdly, the fact that there were two professional observers who worked relatively independent from one another seemed to minimize any personal observational biases each may have had. Finally, the fact that the research strategy called for the fixing of observational categories only after a notable period of field work had been completed seemed to help the observers establish a sense of priority to their work consonant with that of the program's participants themselves.

APPENDIX A

CODING SCHEME

Instructional Methods, Materials, and Contents

1. Teacher/counselor (T.C.) solicits understanding from class by question and answer method or by giving an explanation.

2. T.C. gives individual instruction in class (e.g., T.C. sits next to student to help him; T.C. calls student to his desk to help him).

3. T.C. gives individualized instruction outside class.

4. T.C. uses programmed instruction.

5. T.C. recognizes learning differences by giving an individual student additional or more challenging work when class assignment seems too easy for him; students request such recognition (see also failure management).

6. T.C. uses games, role playing.

7. T.C. uses test as a diagnostic tool (e.g. tells class that test is to help T.C. to understand student's progress rather than for evaluation).

8. T.C. divides class into groups for instruction.

9. T.C. gives written exercises to be completed in class or out of class as homework.

10. T.C. gives student project (e.g. term paper) as independent work.

11. T.C. gives basic skills instruction separately or in other contexts (e.g. computational or communications skills in social studies).

12. Student seeks help from T.C. in class, out of class.

13. Student tutors student in class, out of class.

14. Students willingly participate in class or do work assigned.

15. T.C. uses outside resource people.

16. T.C. uses audio-visual aids, radio, T.V. etc.

17. Other (e.g. trips; class projects).

Categories indicate reaction as well as action.

Incentives and Rewards as Motivating Devices

18. T.C. verbally compliments student on correct or partially correct answer.

19. T.C. uses tests, quizzes or grades as incentive.

20. T.C. or Middle College offers reward for commendable effort or performance.

21. T.C. presents challenging or interesting materials to class.

22. T.C. has students accumulate credits or keep a folder or a public chart of individual achievement to indicate progress.

23. T.C. allows those who have completed work to leave early.

24. T.C. has student sign a contract acknowledging course's objectives, grading system and methods.

25. Other.

Failure Management

26. T.C. manages failure sympathetically, giving encouragement (e.g. "I know you can do it").

27. T.C. manages failure with annoyance, scolding student (e.g. "You should know this").

28. T.C. redefines or simplifies task for individual or class to help student(s) work through theproblem.

29. Student manages failure by voluntarily trying again.

30. Student manages failure by giving up.

31. Other.

Counseling Patterns (Personal, Academic or Career)

L1. T.C. counsels student on attendance, lateness, cutting or assumption of one's responsibility.

L2. T.C. counsels student on home or family matters.

L3. T.C. counsels student on academic matters, including scheduling, grades, class performance etc.

L4. T.C. counsels parents on student's personal and academic performance.

L5. T.C. encourages individual student and class decision-making.

L6. Guidance Counselor, Director, or Assistant Director counsels on all of the above.

L7. Guidance Counselor counsels students on careers or "coping skills" (e.g. how to apply for a job, take a test, etc.

L8. T.C. facilitates or initiates house activity (e.g. speakers, films, etc.).

L9. Guidance Counselor adjudicates counseling dilemmas between students and T.C.

L10. Middle College and College students' reactions to peer counseling.

L11. Teacher and student evaluation process.

Discipline in the Classroom

L12. T.C. ignores talking or disorderly behavior.

L13. T.C. verbally disapproves of student behavior (e.g. chides, reprimands).

L14. T.C. uses or threatens to use punitive measures (e.g. dismissal, lowering grade, calling parents).

L15. Students ask other students to stop or reprimand other students for lateness, disorderly conduct, etc.

L16. T.C. responds to late arrival or early departure (e.g. ignoring, chiding, welcoming).

L17. T.C. behavior in the face of student hostility to program to teacher, or to other students.

L.18 Other

LaGuardia College-Middle College Interface

B1. College Administration's public support of Middle College program (e.g. College officials participate in Middle College functions--orientation, special events, faculty meetings, etc.; College officials encourage College community to participate in Middle College program).

B2. College professors' reactions to Middle College students in class (e.g. professor makes no distinction among students in class; professor distinguishes Middle College students publicly from College students; professor uses different teaching

methods or materials for Middle College students; professor's opinion of Middle College students).

B3. Middle College-College faculty interaction (e.g. Middle College faculty or administration takes initiative in creating a liaison with College faculty; College faculty takes initiative in creating such liaison; Middle College and College faculties collaborate over curriculum or program planning, including career education; faculties share facilities).

B4. Middle College-College students' informal interaction (e.g. reactions in the presence of each other at informal gathering places, such as cafeteria, lounge, rest rooms, game rooms, hallways; College students' reactions to the infusion of Middle College students on the campus).

B5. Middle College-College students' formal interaction (e.g. College students' reaction to Middle College students--indifferent, cordial, condescending, outgoing; Middle College students' behavior in College classes--quiet, participating, maintaining separate identity, outgoing; Middle College students' reaction to college level material, instruction, and content).

B6. "Alternative school for teachers"; Other.

B7. Quotable quotes.

B8. Space and facilities.

Location of Observation

R20. House
R19. English class
R18. Math class
R17 Social studies class
R16 Science class
R15 Spanish class
R14 College class
R13 Staff meeting
R12 Lab (reading, writing, math, chemistry).
R11 Other

(Diagram No. 1)

APPENDIX B

MIDDLE COLLEGE - REMEDIAL APPROACH

REMEDIAL COMPONENTS		AIM
Size and Setting	→	Motivation Individualized Instruction
Counseling (Academic-Personal)	→	Interpersonal Skills - decision-making cooperation leadership
Basic Skill Instruction	→	Communication and Computational Skills

(Diagram No. 2)

MIDDLE COLLEGE - REMEDIAL APPROACH

PARTICIPANT OBSERVATION RESEARCH DESIGN

Remedial Components	Observation	Aim
Size and Setting →	Participant Interaction →	Motivation
	Teacher-Student Student-Student College-Student	Individualized Instruction
Counseling (Academic-Personal) →	House Interaction →	Interpersonal Skills decision-making cooperation leadership
	Activities Teacher Counselor Role	
Basic Skill Instruction →	Classroom Interaction →	communication and computational skills
	Instructional Methods Incentives and Rewards Failure Management Classroom Discipline	

APPENDIX C

CODING DATA: FREQUENCY OF THEMES[1]

I. STUDENTS (N=30)[2]

	High Achievers	Med. Achievers	Low Achievers	Total
1. How is the M.C. different from a regular high school?				
a. Better relations with teachers, more freedoms & privileges, more lenient discipline	8	6	6	20
b. More adult treatment	2	2	4	8
c. Academic advantages (college work; individual attention)	5	1	0	6
d. Smaller size	2	1	0	3
e. Too much freedom and vandalism	0	1	2	3
f. It's no different from other schools	0	1	2	3
g. Social advantages - friends	1	0	1	2
h. Don't know	2	0	0	2
2. Has the small size made a difference?				
a. Yes	6	7	8	21
b. No	2	2	3	7
c. Don't know; it depends	2	1	1	4

1. These charts represent thematic or content analysis. As such their totals do not always correspond with the actual number of respondents. Analysis recorded one theme per person per subject.
2. There were students selected in each category according to their grade performance in the first quarter.

	High Achievers	Med. Achievers	Low Achievers	Total
3. Has the college setting made a difference?				
a. No	7	7	4	18
b. Psycho-Social Advantages (e.g. "more self control" "feel more important")	2	3	5	10
c. Don't know; it depends	2	1	4	7
d. Yes	1	1	3	5
4. Improvement in basic skills				
A. Reading				
a. No	5	4	6	15
b. Yes	2	6	4	12
c. Don't know; maybe	3	2	0	5
B. Writing				
a. Yes	6	3	4	13
b. No	1	5	5	11
c. Don't know; maybe	2	2	0	4
C. Math				
a. Yes	7	7	3	17
b. Don't know; maybe	3	2	3	8
c. No	1	1	4	6

	High Ach.	Med. Ach.	Low Ach.	Total
5. Improvements in social awareness				
A. Knowledge of the city				
a. Yes	6	5	6	17
b. No	3	5	4	12
c. Don't know; maybe	3	0	0	3
B. Knowledge of the country				
a. Yes	3	3	4	10
b. No	6	5	3	14
c. Don't know; maybe	3	2	3	8
C. Knowledge of the world				
a. Yes	3	4	5	12
b. No	3	6	4	13
c. Don't know; maybe	4	0	1	5
6. Attendance				
A. Attend regularly				
a. Yes	9	8	2	19
b. No	0	0	6	6
c. Sometimes	1	3	0	4
B. Usually on time				
a. Yes	6	6	1	13
b. Sometimes	3	4	2	9
c. No	1	0	1	2

	High Ach.	Med. Ach.	Low Ach.	Total
C. Should attendance policy be stricter?				
a. Yes	5	2	2	9
b. A little, but not too much	2	3	4	9
c. No	2	3	3	8
D. Do you feel there's too much free time?				
a. I like the free time	1	5	3	9
b. I don't like the free time	3	4	0	7
7. Do you like self-evaluation?				
a. Yes	6	7	9	22
b. No	4	1	0	5
8. Are teachers usually helpful?				
a. Yes	8	10	10	28
b. No	1	0	0	1
9. What do you do in House?				
a. Organized activities (trips, movies, games, decorating room)	6	3	4	13
b. Non-organized activities (take attendance, informal conversation, read newspapers)	1	3	4	8
c. Not much, nothing	3	4	1	8
9(a) Do you like the House idea?				
a. Yes	4	5	6	15
b. No	4	3	2	9
c. Mixed feelings	2	2	2	6
10. Have you ever done independent work at Middle College? What sort?				
Yes, homework (reports, projects, journal, research	7	6	1	14
Yes, make-up work	1	3	4	8
Other	1	-	1	2
No	1	1	4	6

	High Ach.	Med. Ach.	Low Ach.	Total
10(a) Reactions to Academic Program				
A. Independent study (reports, projects, make-up work)				
a. Enjoy it	6	5	3	14
b. Do not like it	2	1	2	5
c. Mixed feelings	1	2	0	3

	High Ach.	Med. Ach.	Low Ach.	Total
B. Favorite class				
a. Don't know; all the same	5	2	2	9
b. Social studies	2	1	5	8
c. Math	1	3	0	4
d. English	1	2	1	4
e. Biology	0	1	1	2
f. Spanish	0	1	0	1
C. Least favorite class				
a. Don't know; all the same	4	3	2	9
b. Math	2	1	5	8
c. English	1	3	2	6
d. Social studies	4	0	0	4
e. Biology	1	1	1	3
f. Spanish	1	0	0	1
g. Chemistry	1	0	0	1
11. Future plans				
a. Unclear	5	6	2	13
b. 2-year college	3	2	6	11
c. 4-year college	3	5	2	10
d. A trade, e.g. mechanics	2	3	3	8
e. Bum around for a while	0	1	3	4
f. Nursing	2	0	2	4
g. Law	1	2	0	3
h. Medicine	1	1	0	2

	High Ach.	Med. Ach.	Low Ach.	Total
11a. Is M.C. helping you to achieve your goals?				
a. Yes	3	6	3	12
b. Don't know	2	4	3	9
c. No	5	0	3	8
12. Interface				
A. Do you like going to school with College students?				
a. Yes	4	6	9	19
b. No difference	4	3	1	8
c. No	1	0	0	1
B. Have you met any College students?				
a. Yes	5	8	9	22
b. No	4	1	1	6
C. Perception of College students' attitudes towards M.C.				
a. They don't like us	3	5	4	12
b. Don't know; no contact	5	5	2	12
c. Some like us, some don't	1	2	2	5
d. They think M.C. is all right	2	1	1	4
e. They envy us	1	1	1	3
f. They blame us for everything, rightfully or wrongly	1	1	1	3

	High Ach.	Med. Ach.	Low Ach.	Total
13. What type of students is M.C. appropriate for?				
a. Those with academic difficulties	2	3	3	8
b. Those who really want to learn; responsible, mature students	3	2	3	8
c. Truants and those who have been in trouble	1	2	1	4
d. Everybody	1	2	1	4
14. Would you recommend M.C. to friends?				
a. Yes	3	6	8	17
b. Don't know; maybe	6	1	0	7
c. No	1	3	2	6
15. What changes would you like to see in M.C.?				
a. Stricter discipline with respect to cutting, misbehavior, vandalism	4	5	0	9
b. Tighter schedule - all classes in a row so we can get out earlier	4	3	0	7
c. A place to go and things to do during free time; a lounge, gym, sports clubs	0	4	2	6
d. Nothing - its fine as is	1	1	4	6
e. More college work	0	1	1	2
f. A chance to work	1	1	0	2

II TEACHERS (N=10)

Frequency of Themes

1. Remediation

   A. Principal remedial difficulties:

      a. Language skills - comprehension, vocabulary, organization of ideas — 7

      b. Study skills: following instructions, structuring one's own time, work discipline, note-taking, outlining, using the library, attention span, listening — 5

      c. Computational skills - addition, subtraction, multiplication, division, decimals, measurement, fractions, symbols. — 3

      d. Everything — 2

   B. Who prescribes remedial help?

      a. Subject teacher — 6

      b. The reading specialist or the administration — 3

   C. Are you integrating remediation into subject areas?

      a. Yes - structured comprehension, oral reading, vocabulary, fractions, following directions, etc. — 8

      b. No - only incidentally — 1

2. Impact of size

   Yes, in varying degrees more personal; knowing students by name makes them feel we care; teachers and counselors are accessible — 10

3. Impact of College Setting

a. Positive Impact (anticipatory socialization, greater academic and personal freedom)	14
b. Negative Impact (negative peer influences, too much freedom, short of facilities)	10
c. No or little impact	4

4. Differences between M.C. and traditional high school

A. Curriculum

a. Different content - "Who Am I," comp. sulture; urban problems	4
b. Greater freedom to develop your own curriculum	4
c. Content level is lower	3

B. Discipline

a. Relaxed, personal relationship between students and teachers make it easier to handle discipline problems	4
b. There are no deans or punitive authorities	3
c. We have no more problems than a traditional high school	1
d. It's much worse here	1
e. It's much better here	1

C. Relations with Students

a. Much closer involvement with students; more informal, friendlier relations	6
b. No difference - my style hasn't changed	2

D. Relations with other faculty and administration

a. More communication, more colleagial, friendlier, more cooperative	8
b. Too much bureaucracy and red tape, not enough communication with administration	2
c. Not enough authority is exercised	1
d. They are not innovative enough	1

E. Teacher-Counselor Role

a. It's much more viable for both students and teachers 3
b. Favorable, but may be too difficult; not enough time; more training needed 5
c. It's not different - every good teacher is a counselor 4

5. Achievements of M.C.

A. Student Goals

a. More positive attitude towards education and more interest in going to college 5
b. More positive self-image 1

B. Students' Awareness of Urban and National Society

a. Greater awareness (particularly urban) 5
b. No increments in awareness compared to traditional high school 3
c. Moderate increase in awareness 2

C. Other Successes

a. Closer, friendlier, more pleasant relationships; warm atmosphere 5
b. Academic improvement, retention, attendance 3
c. More positive attitudes towards themselves, school and learning 2

D. Other Themes

a. More career education 5
b. Too early to tell of achievements 5

6. Interface with College

A. Amount of interaction

a. Notable in some areas 5
b. Moderate 3
c. Poor 2

B. Type of Interaction

a.	Facilities and clubs	5
b.	With faculty in same discipline or department (mostly for administrative or committee work)	7
c.	Guest speakers, house volunteers, etc.	3

C. Attitude towards further interaction

a.	Greater amount of interaction needed (particularly more academic interaction, i.e., with faculty in same departments)	14
b.	More resources and facilities, including college courses should be made available	4
c.	M.C. teachers wish recognition as adjunct college faculty	2

D. Perceived attitude of College

a.	Unfavorable - lack of communication, misunderstanding, dislike for M.C., tendency to view M.C. as parasitic	8
b.	College is perceived as anguished by realities of urban high school	3
c.	With better communication, it could improve	3
d.	Favorable - they are helpful	1

7. Appropriate Target Population

a.	Average aptitude, low achievement	5
b.	Students turned off by traditional schools; students with emotional or disciplinary problems; students who lack direction	4
c.	We can't handle severe emotional problems and students who lack direction	3
d.	Any student could benefit	1
e.	Let's settle on one target group - we can't be all things for all people	1

8. Students' Influence on Scheduling

a.	Low	8
b.	More than in other schools	2
c.	Need for more organized student input	2

9. Attendance Policy

a. What we need is not more penalties, but unambiguous policy, counseling, development of self-discipline, parental involvement, positive motivation. Not necessarily stricter. 9
b. Should be stricter with more penalties 6

10. Decision Making

A. Course content and method

a. Teacher largely responsible 9

B. Independent Study

a. Teachers and students 6
b. Administration 1
c. Was not significant to mention 1

11. Grading System

A. Do you approve of grading system?

a. I approve of self evaluation 8
b. I approve of E-S-G-P-I system, it's as good as any 5
c. I would prefer numerical or A-B-C-D-F grades 2
d. It's the process that counts 2
e. I approve with reservations 1
f. I'd prefer P/F 1

B. Criteria for grading

a. Attendance and completion of assignments 4
b. Everything 3
c. Effort and attitude 3
d. Quality of work 1

12. What would you like to change?

a.	More emphasis on teachers' morale, training, collegial relations, communication, equality with administration	5
b.	More supportive structure with respect to students and staff work	4
c.	More flexibility and innovativeness	3
d.	More career education	2
e.	More interdisciplinary instruction	2
f.	More college involvement and better relations with college	2
g.	More student input	2

13. What lessons should be applied elsewhere?

a.	Size	9
b.	More interaction between teachers and students, more humanitarian approach to teaching, 1 to 1 relationships with students: the teacher-counselor role	6

III COLLEGE STUDENTS (N=23)

Thematic Chart

1. Knowledge of M.C.

a.	Don't know anything about M.C.	19
b.	Named one or more goals, e.g. early remediation	4

2. Opinion about Programs Goals

a.	No opinion; not sure	11
b.	Good idea - approve of early remediation and opportunity to grow up	6
c.	Good idea if students can behave	2
d.	Should not be here	3

3. Opinion about M.C. Program's Presence on Campus

a.	Don't mind, "they don't bother me".	11
b.	No opinion	5
c.	Don't mind if students behave	4
d.	Should not be here	3

STUDENT INTERVIEW GUIDE

1. Do you think the Middle College is different from a regular high school? In what ways?

2. Do you think that being in a small school has helped you to learn? How?

3. Do you think that being on a college campus has helped you to learn? How?

4. Do you feel that you can read better than when you came here?

5. Do you feel that you can write better than when you came here?

6. Do you feel that you can do math better than when you came here?

7. Do you feel that you know more about New York City than when you came here? Give examples.

8. Do you feel that you know more about the United States than when you came here? Give examples.

9. Do you feel that you know more about other societies or other people than when you came here? Give examples.

10. Do you usually go to all your classes regularly?

11. Are you usually on time?

12. Do you think the school should be stricter on cutting and lateness?

13. Do you like evaluating your own performance? Does the teacher usually pay attention to what you think of your own work?

14. Do you feel that your teachers help you when you need it?

15. What kind of things do you do in your house? Who decides what kind of activities should go on? Do you like the activities that go on in your house? Do you like the idea of belonging to a house?

16. Has your teacher ever had you work on something by yourself, outside the classroom? (e.g. a project, tutoring etc). If so, was it to make up work or for some other purpose? How do you like independent work compared with classroom work?

17. What is your favorite class? Why?

18. What is your least favorite class? Why?

19. What do you plan to do after you graduate from the Middle College? Do you plan to go on to college? What do you plan to study? Do you plan to look for a job? What kind?

20. Do you think the Middle College is helping you to achieve your goals? How?

21. Do you like going to school with college students?

22. Have you met any college students since you came here?

23. Have they ever said anything to you about the Middle College? (e.e. what is their opinion of the Middle College?)

24. Would you recommend the Middle College to your 9th-grade friends? Why or why not?

25. Is there anything in the Middle College you would like to see changed next year?

THANK YOU!

TEACHER-COUNSELOR INTERVIEW GUIDE

1. What do you think are some of the principal remedial difficulties of students in your area of competence?

2. Who decides the amount and type of remediation a student is to receive?

3. In those classes that you taught which were not specifically intended to be remedial, did you consciously offer basic skills instruction? If yes, what was the type of basic skill instruction that you offered?

4. Do you feel the Middle College's size has of itself been an incentive for students to learn?

5. Do you feel the Middle College's setting (on a college campus) been an incentive for students to learn?

6. How is your experience in the Middle College different from teaching in a traditional high school with regard to:
a. Curriculum (course offerings, content of teaching)?

b. Student discipline?

c. Relations with students?

d. Relations with colleagues and administration?

7. How does the teacher-counselor role differ from the traditional teacher role? How do you feel about this role?

8. What impact, if any do you think the Middle College has had on the future college and/or career goals of students? Do you think the M.C. has been helpful to them in accomplishing their goals?

9. What impact, if any, do you think that the M.C. has had on creating an awareness in students of their urban and national society?

10. How extensive has been your interaction with College faculty and/or activities? What have been the results, if any, of this interaction?

11. Would you like to see greater or lesser interaction? If greater, in what areas?

12. How, if at all, do you think the M.C. has influenced the campus climate?

13. In your opinion, what type of students would benefit most from the M.C. experience. What type of students are least likely to benefit? (try to be specific--e.g., students who need remedial help, students who are academically ready for advanced work, students with discipline problems?)

14. In reality, how much influence do students have in determining their schedules? How much influence do you think they should have?

15. Do you think there should be more stringent penalties with regard to absenteeism, lateness and cutting? If yes, what type of penalties?

16. Who makes the decisions about the contents of the courses that you teach? About your teaching methods? About the materials you use? (i.e. how much influence do students, teacher and administration have on these decisions)

17. Who makes the decision as to whether a student may pursue independent study, whether for make-up or for advanced work? (i.e., teacher, guidance counselor, student, or administration).

18. Do you approve of the idea of student self-evaluation for grading purposes? How much weight does the student's self-evaluation carry in determining his final grade?

19. Has the E-G-S-P-F grading system met with your satisfaction?

20. What criteria do you commonly use to determine a student's performance? (e.g. attendance, test grades, participation, effort, homework)

21. Is there anything you would like to see done differently in the Middle College next year?

22. Are there any aspects of the M.C. you would like to see implemented by other high schools?

INTERVIEW GUIDE - COLLEGE STUDENTS
JANUARY, 1975

DATE_____

PLACE_____

SEX: Male ☐ Female ☐

CLASS: Freshman ☐ Sophomore ☐

1. What do you know, if anything, about the Middle College program here at LaGuardia? (Do you know what it is trying to accomplish?)

2. (If students seem to be acquainted with goals ask the following question. If not, go on to Question 3). Do you think the program is a good idea? If so, why? If not, why not?

3. How do you feel about having the Middle College students here on campus? (Do you mind their beying here?)

4. If student didn't have a clear view of the Middle College goals, explain them, stressing: (1) facilitation of maturation process, (2) earlier remediation and preparation for college work, (3) career education. Then ask if student has an opinion of the program.

UNIVERSITY OF CALIF.
LOS ANGELES

OCT 24 1975

CLEARINGHOUSE FOR
JUNIOR COLLEGES